



## **Human Sexuality in the Life of Adults and the Elderly: Report of a Field Study in Porto Velho, Rondônia, Brazil.**

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Received: 03 Nov 2020;

Received in revised form:

11 Jan 2021;

Accepted: 07 Feb 2021;

Available online: 20 Feb 2021

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**Keywords**—Adult, Elderly, Human Development, History of sexuality, Human Sexuality.

**Abstract**— This work aims to know the representations of sexuality in adults and the elderly in the development of sexuality in the genital phase, in order to understand the expression of the sexuality of these individuals from the perspective of Freudian theory, the methodology used was constituted through the practice of observation, application of interviews and analysis of data obtained in conjunction with bibliographic references, the public served was men and women between 25 and 70 years old, in a total of 10 people. The results obtained were the verification of the scarcity of works aimed at the adult phase of human development, and numerous references about the social representations of sexuality in the elderly, showing the sexual repressions suffered by them by society, which we could also see in the interviewees' discourse, such as: prejudices, guilt, changes, needs, wants, fears, etc. Our intention to know the representations of the sexuality of this public and the possible changes in sexual practice was limited, mainly due to the scarcity with regard to scientific articles aimed at adult and elderly life from the perspective of the Freudian genital phase, due also to little knowledge that the public had on the subject of sexuality, it became evident that there is confusion between sexuality and sex itself, impairing the evaluation of responses, and also due to the number of participants who joined the survey, even so, this points to the importance to open research on this topic.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Sexuality is still an object of great taboo by society, sexuality in the genital phase that includes adults and the elderly, is even more problematic. Currently, the speeches that are on the topic of sexuality, do not yet cover all its meaning. From a psychoanalytic perspective, sexuality at this age is experienced with characteristics that can only be acquired at a certain age. Queiroz et al (2015), reports such experiences well, particularly those that refer to the elderly.

From this perspective, Queiroz et al (2015) there is also an increase in this population, and, consequently, an increase in the views that aim to properly think about old age. Social representations are present at all ages, as well as the social representation of the sexuality of adults and the elderly, and the concept of sexuality that has changed over the years.

We consider this topic of extreme importance, since even though studies are done on the subject, it does not contemplate the dynamics of these people in their entirety, and, we think a contribution in this sense is necessary. We seek to verify, under the eyes of these everyday actors, their practices and beliefs, and feelings about their own sexuality. The research method chosen was an open and closed interview, in which we sought to collect relevant information on the subject, and having the interview as a working method, the freedom with which issues can be treated was considered a priority.

The results found reveal discrepancies in some aspects, such as the distinction of answers in relation to what could be more important about their sexualities, and we were able to verify, even, what is meant by sexuality in a more open interview, which gives rise to a discussion wider.

## II. DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 - Brief historical constitution of sexuality

The history of human sexuality, being a complex and vast subject, will be treated here in a pragmatic way, with the sole intention of contextualizing the socio-historical roots that are engendered in the view of contemporary relations on sexuality. We will make an outline of this history, punctuating the ancient civilizations that gave rise to Western sexual practices, from antiquity to the contemporary of the 19th century, trying to point out the importance of culture, beliefs, myths and customs in the formation of human mentality and behavior regarding sexuality.

According to Guedes et al (2007) In Babylon, capital of ancient Mesopotamia considered the cradle of cultural sex, there was a culture devoted to worship that devoted

sensual love through sexual practice, for the Babylonians such practices were attributed the value of a rite transition from nature to culture. There are records that certify that they had their own sanctuaries and liturgies, in which sacred prostitutions, heterosexual sexual intercourse, sexual practices between women, or between men of the same sex occurred without apparent moral condemnation, and to the priestesses of the goddess Aphrodite (women cultural sex workers) were separated from their fate of wives and mothers, and given *status* were respected because they were servants of the goddess of fertility. For these people, love was a natural activity that was culturally practiced by individuals in this society and orgasm brought them closer to the presence of the goddess.

This city only became known to the Western people through the Bible, from the historical accounts of the Old Testament in which it was indicated as an example of a sinful city, called the "prostituted city", condemned due to sex outside of marriage and as a representation of the sacred and the worship of the Greek gods. In ancient Greece, a patriarchal society, based on monogamous marriage, although the adult Greek man was socially permitted to have sex with both his wife and his concubines. It remains for the wife to fulfill the role of fidelity. Sacred prostitution or cultural sex also existed in this formation of society, but with a marginal character, being reserved for specific locations.

During this period, studies report that sexual practices, the Greek man was also protected the right to have relations with people of the same sex, some scholars delegate to this practice "Greek homosexuality", contested by others who defend as "Greek pederasty", which according to Greek etymology, it means "love for the child (parents)", which consisted of a pedagogical and loving relationship between an adult and a teenager including sexual initiation. What was decisive in this type of sexual attitude was the relationship of activity or passivity in the sexual act. In Greek pederasty the boy (eromenos) occupies the passive position and the adult man (erastes) the active position, with love as the intention to make him a sexually active man and not sex itself the wisest adult man guided the young man in customs, postures, et al , 2007).

It is worth mentioning that the Greeks did not accept sexual relations between adult men as well as between women. Among men, they were socially condemned, since a citizen should be sexually active, just as he was politically active. If this behavior were to become public, it would result in the loss of their political rights. And women were only meant for procreation during marriage. Therefore, pederasty was considered a normal and superior

relationship in relation to other forms of love, valued as having an integrative civil function, which taught the individual how to assume his responsibilities as a citizen.

Sexual practices that in other cultures, times and civilizations and laws, would be classified as vulnerable rape and pedophilia. In Brazil today, for example, in the strictly legal sphere, pedophilia is commonly regarded as the sexual abuse of children and adolescents, giving rise to numerous crimes provided for in both the ECA and the Brazilian Penal Code, Law No. 12,015 of August 2009, in which says "The law will severely punish the abuse, violence and sexual exploitation of children and adolescents" and Art. 217-A of the Penal Code; rape of vulnerable (LIMA; FRANCE, 2014).

In ancient Rome, bisexual behavior still existed in adulthood, but with certain changes, because it is an intense hatred of the passive relationship, the passive subject should necessarily be a slave, regardless of his age. Through logic, "you get pleasure when you are free and you give pleasure when you serve". Roman marriage was considered a private and informal act, being easy to perform and separate. There were two reasons for marrying, in this society, money and the legitimate existence of descendants. The rupture of this union could come from both sides (GUEDES *et al*, 2007). From the republican period to imperial Rome, two different morals constituted the monogamous relationship. The first moral recommended marriage, the wife could also be "borrowed" between two masters, and in the case of adultery by the wife, the husband was ridiculed by society for having failed to "take care" of the wife, as she was considered as an irresponsible being. The second moral also indicated to the man the fidelity, other times attributed only to the woman, and that he should only make love (sex) for the purpose of procreation, respecting his wife, and this should be valued, that is, a relationship based on the feeling.

During the Roman Empire Christianity was born, based on the teachings of Jesus Christ who would be the Messiah, considered by his followers as the one sent by God to the world to liberate and save his faithful. Its birth occurred during the reign of Otávio Augusto, first Roman emperor, in a period with strong Jewish influences, Jewish society, which in turn, had a great social motivation for the repression of the pleasurable manifestations of sexuality.

The Jews needed to assert themselves as a people, since the other peoples of the time were all polytheists, with highly sexed and erotic gods, as we saw in Babylonian society, and these would have originated from the sexual union between gods almost always brothers, the which characterized an incestuous act, which would justify the worship of an asexual God (Yahweh), without having

had a sexual act for his birth, without having the weight of the cult of "sacred sexuality".

Some Jewish values were maintained, all Christian priests were encouraged to maintain an regulated active sex life through monogamous and heterosexual marriage, for example. But, over time, in the early centuries of the Christian era, theological treatises praised female virginity and devalued marriage. And they also wrote instructions about sexual desires directed to some servants of God according to the authors:

Between the 4th and 6th centuries, monastic literature appeared, aimed at men who lived isolated in monasteries and constantly fought against their desire. These writings addressed the lone combat of fornication and provided the monks with techniques for observing the "flesh" to combat it (DANTAS, 2010, p.701).

In order to attract more believers, the Church gave up its defense strategy for marriage, treating it as a stopgap for those who were unable to dedicate themselves to abstinence, not as an act that would purify their bodies, but as a way of reducing filth. . Marriage, which was an aristocratic practice and restricted to the domestic space, suffered interference from the Church in the 12th century, building rules and precepts about marriage, inducing Christians to follow their matrimonial model, whose main precepts were marital indissolubility and monogamy , this ideal of marriage was imposed and if not fulfilled, the faithful would be under the threat of excommunication. The nuptial ceremony previously performed on the breasts of families was transferred to the Church, which guaranteed the priest to celebrate it, as explained by Dantas (2010, p.703-704)

The sacramentalization of marriage ensured the consolidation of the Church's political power, but not before facing aristocratic opposition, as aristocrats were in the habit of repudiating their women and forming new marriages. Forcing the Church not to expressly prohibit the dissolution of the marriage bond.Gradually the Christian model of marriage, monogamous and unaltered, prevailed.

This relation to the control of the church over the conduct of the faithful towards marriage, there was a method used to have control over the couple's sexual acts, legal-theological codes were elaborated that discriminated between permitted and prohibited acts. It was stated that sex was for reproduction purposes only, and everything else was lewd, stipulated that there should be no sexual relations with a sign of respect for holy days, among other prohibitions. As Dantas describes, (2010, p.706) "[...] sexual intercourse was prohibited on holy days, religious celebrations, Sundays, periods of menstruation, pregnancy, breastfeeding and the forty days after delivery.

Theologians, therefore, considerably restricted the time devoted to sexual practice".

After a while, the church realized through the confessions of the faithful that despite attempts to control the intimacy of couples, it was unable to absolutely monitor something so restricted, so According to Dantas (2010 *apud*VAINFAS, 1986, p.707), "From the 16th century onwards, there was greater flexibility among theologians in relation to the conjugal act for that reason, they made the strategies adopted and the penalties applied minimally flexible". And so, we come to contextualization through the ages, the formation of aspects of human sexuality from a historical perspective.

## **2.2- Brief history of social representations of sexuality in adults**

Sexuality, according to Vitiello and Conceição (1993), can be understood from a broad and comprehensive focus, manifesting itself in all stages of life in each and every human being and despite what spreads culturally and popularly, has in genius only one of its aspects, perhaps even the least important.

Dall'Agnol (2003) alerts us to the connotations that certain subjects have over the years and how some remain in the same pattern, while others undergo significant processes of change. There is still, according to the author, a complexity when defining words related to the theme of sexuality in the adult phase of human development, this fact is directly related to the multiplicity of aspects that it covers, as well as the breadth and meaning.

Within the psychological frameworks, as Dall'Agnol (2003) states, we can attribute a contemporary meaning to sexuality derived directly from Freud's psychoanalytic findings, which broke with the fields of perversions and repressions adopted by the biomedical and psychological view of the time. On the other hand, Foucault in postmodernity says that sexuality is the result of different factors, proposing a broader concept, among them: speeches by the sages, the rules and imperatives of the powers they establish and the meaning and value, conduct, duties, pleasures you know or aspire to.

We understand social representations, as Vieira *et al* (2016) guides us, as a system of values, ideas and practices that have a dual function: to establish an order that allows people to orient themselves in their material and social world and to control it; and also to make communication possible between members of a community, providing them with a code to name and classify, unambiguously, the various aspects of their world and their individual and social history.

Therefore, sexuality cannot be reduced to the sexual act, but it can be understood as a way of being that is incorporated into a body through its practices. Within a broader context, Vitiello and Conceição (1993), one can consider the influence of sexuality that permeates all human manifestations, from birth to death. In this way, we can think of sexuality within a biopsychosocial dimension, where the subject receives a strong influence from social life in the construction of meaning. Marola, Sanches and Cardoso (2011) reinforce "[...] the meaning of sexuality as a symbolic and historical process when stating that the constitution of a subject's identity is manifested in the way he experiences the issues of intimate treatment, considering the moral and ethical issues of the social group in which it is inserted "(p. 96).

In view of this, these meanings were constructed and undergo continuous re-signification processes where the historical context assigns new meanings. The movements of the 1970s, for example, caused numerous changes in sexual practices and sexuality, demystifying reproduction and presenting an approach to the body and health promotion for women. In this sense, we can think of several other movements, advances or changes in paradigms that modified social representations at a given historical moment.

Vitiello and Conceição (1993) affirm that the adult phase is or should be the most significant period of human sexuality, since the subject is sufficiently mature and safe to establish solid affective bonds and, in the majority, to enjoy properly and pleasantly, if your sexuality. This maturation that we are talking about can be represented at different times and this will depend on each person and their experiences at each stage of human development, however, it is more frequently reached during the young-adult phase, up to 30 years old, or at the end of it.

Unfortunately, at the cost of a distorted sex education and the most diverse social prejudices (among which machismo is evident), this is not always the case. It is not uncommon for people to have a distorted notion of sexuality, failing to see it as something positive, as something good and beautiful, as a gift. (VITIELLO; CONCEIÇÃO, 1993, p. 55).

We observed that throughout history, quite distorted concepts of sexuality have been created, where men and women have assigned themselves supreme and mandatory goals, such as orgasm, considered the climax or real meaning of sexuality, therefore.

In this sense, it is the "obligation" of the man to give orgasms to the woman, as if orgasms were present that the male omnipotence can distribute at his pleasure. The woman, in turn, to consider herself "truly a woman", must

have orgasms (preferably multiple), without which she considers herself a failure. (VITIELLO; CONCEIÇÃO, 1993, p. 55).

Paiva (2008, *apud* Weeks 2000), on the other hand, seeks to understand and provides us with a broader view of the attitudes towards the body and sexuality, apprehending the power relations that shape what is defined as normal and abnormal. Sex would be the descriptive term for basic, external anatomical differences, which biologically differentiate men and women, gender is the social differentiation between men and women and sexuality is a general description for a series of beliefs, behaviors, relationships and socially constructed identities and historically modeled, without being reduced to sexual practice.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The present work was developed from a theoretical and practical activity of the Human Sexuality discipline. It is a *survey* study. The work methodology consisted of an analysis of published bibliographic references with the keywords: human sexuality in adults and the elderly; elaboration of a brief interview script (see appendix) aimed at adults and elderly people aged 25 to 70 years from the theoretical framework analyzed; selection of a questionnaire obtained in the digital research platforms and modified aiming at the objectives of the present work (see annex); observation of adults and the elderly and application of data collection in a local square in the city of Porto Velho-RO, on a night of cultural event; analysis

of results based on the theoretical and written framework of the report.

### IV. RESULTS

The interview script was applied to four participants and the questionnaire obtained on the digital platform was applied to six other participants, totaling 10 participants at the end.

*Table 1- Categorization of the response of the interviewed adults and elderly, RO, Brazil, Nov. 2017.*

PARTICIPANT	AGE	SEX	ANSWERS
I	53	M	Respect Loyalty Health Protection
II	31	F	Loyalty Freedom Open Dialogue
III	50	F	Respect Self esteem Loyalty
IV	50	M	Health Protection Self esteem Freedom
V	64	F	Respect Love Health Protection
VI	66	F	Respect Pleasure Information

Source: Authors, 2017.

#### Question 1 - What does sexuality mean to you?

PARTICIPANT	ANSWERS
I	Everything and more. Without that, we can't walk, right?
II	I think we need sex. You see, we get a little disturbed when we run out. Even more if it is with a person that we love.
III	Relief in female orgasm. It is a feminine need.
IV	For me, it has to represent love, togetherness.

#### Question 2 - Is the importance you attach to sexuality today different from what you used to in the past?

PARTICIPANT	ANSWERS
I	I think experience counts. Child, youth, adult ... Changes in the best sense, of learning.
II	Yes. Note: the participant preferred not to give more information about this question.
III	Do not.
IV	For sure. Nowadays, people think that sex is a joke.

<b>Question 3 - What do you think of sexual practice in elderly people?</b>	
<b>PARTICIPANT</b>	<b>ANSWERS</b>
<b>I</b>	Wonderful. There is a great prejudice regarding sex in old age, but it seems that the thing is more acute (told the example of a neighbor with whom she talked about sexuality). I helped her in some way and she helped me too. When I was a child it was different. There is the will, but not that they do not want, it is knowing how to get there.
<b>II</b>	Normal, if you feel good and want to do ...
<b>III</b>	Very good!
<b>IV</b>	Everything is different between four walls.

<b>Question 4 - Do you consider that there are repressions to sexuality in old age? What are these repressions?</b>	
<b>PARTICIPANT</b>	<b>ANSWERS</b>
<b>I</b>	The main repression is by society, which condemns. It is to think that life is over ... that you are old, that you are dead.
<b>II</b>	Yes. My 76-year-old father, I think that since he doesn't do it anymore, he's kind of disconnected from things.
<b>III</b>	Yes. I can't tell you, but there are.
<b>IV</b>	There is a prejudice, because nowadays people ...

<b>Question 5 - Do you think sex is seen differently than it was seen in the past? What differences do you think exist?</b>	
<b>PARTICIPANT</b>	<b>ANSWERS</b>
<b>I</b>	Yes. In the past things were more camouflaged, today they say "everyone is lost", I don't think it's lost, things are more visible. It has always existed, (give the example of a neighbor who had two husbands), but under seven keys (told the example of a nuns' school where there were cases of homosexuality). It has always existed and today things flow much more. In modernity everyone knows everything.
<b>II</b>	In the past I had more love for each other.
<b>III</b>	No.
<b>IV</b>	<i>Note: the interviewee received a call and had to leave immediately.</i>

#### IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The field data were obtained through observations, application of a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview with adults and the elderly in a cultural environment in the city of Porto Velho-RO, in November 2017. The bibliographic survey was fundamental for the creation interview and modification of the questionnaire obtained on digital platforms according to the delimitations carried out in groups.

The bibliographic survey allowed us to analyze the main characteristics about the sexuality of adults and the elderly and the main axes to be verified in practical contact in the field. Thus, we observed the scarcity of works aimed at the adult stage of human development and, on the other hand, the findings showed us the numerous references on the social representations of sexuality in the elderly, showing the sexual repressions that involve the elderly being in society.

The fieldwork was carried out in a cultural event involving dances and typical foods from other regions and

brought together several people, including children, youth, adults and the elderly, in the central area of the city. Observation, application of questionnaires and interviews totaled about 3 hours. Some environmental factors hindered the application of the instruments, such as the loud sound and the continuous flow of people, however, the environment allowed significant observations about the personal and group manifestations. The present group consisted mostly of adult and elderly couples, between 25 and 70 years old.

The interview script was based on questions in order to know the representations of sexuality in adults and the elderly and the possible changes in sexual practice, as well as sexuality at different times in life, in addition to the factors for such changes. These questions help us to understand different factors that preponderated sexuality in the lives of human beings, such as: prejudices, guilt, changes, needs, wants, fears, etc.

The questionnaire contributed to the verification of the main factors that lead us to understand the significance and

representativeness that adults and the elderly place in what they consider sexuality and proved to be easy to apply in view of environmental variables. Concomitant data contribute to an analysis, albeit limited due to the number of participants, which is important for understanding sexuality from a broader perspective and allows us to expand the existing theoretical discussion.

### **5.1- Sexuality and sexual relations**

According to Foucault (1998, *apud* LEAL 2003) the term sexuality appears in the beginning of the 19th century, and even before its emergence, there were studies on sexual practices and behaviors, on related themes, which started at least in the 17th century. Leal (2003), says that sexuality only became a value, regardless of which parts of the body or acts are considered sexual, starting from Foucault in the 20th century. The author states that what we have as sexuality in the contemporary world, are sets of phenomena that are related to sexual life, sexual act, sexual desires and fantasies, sexual behaviors or parts of the body that are considered sexual.

Queiróz *et al* (2015) states that the production of pleasure is closely related to sexuality, but there is a confusion, since sexuality is recognized only through the sexual act, as if this were the only way to talk about sexuality. From a psychoanalytical point of view, sexuality would then be directed to pleasure and its consequences, as well as to the erotic aspect and the sexual relationship itself.

There is an implicit need to better understand sexuality in its entirety, and Vieira *et al* (2016), provides explanations that differentiate these terms, that is, between sex, sexual intercourse and sexuality. In the article, it is mentioned that there is a document prepared by WHO (World Health Organization), in which a distinction is made between sex, which are the biological characteristics that define who is a man and who is a woman.

Sexuality is seen as "a central aspect of the human being from the beginning to the end of life, and surrounds sex, gender identity and role, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction" (KRUG *et al*, 2002 *apud* VIEIRA *et al*, 2016, p.21)

A study by Uchôa *et al* (2016) in which it was found that the majority of the elderly do not know or cannot distinguish between sex and sexuality, thinking these, as the sexual act and reproduction, and not as a source of pleasure, a way of expressing and experiencing pleasure. It was also verified, that the campaigns that are related to sexuality, are not thought for the elderly public, and, therefore, the lack of information is also prominent in this sense.

This stems from the taboo that sexuality in old age faces, whereas sexuality in adulthood is called the "maturity phase", there is a reductionist perception that provides the basis for these two phases of life, and the psychosocial, emotional aspects, physiologists, are constantly involved in these phases.

Hogan (1985, *apud* ROZENDO; ALVES, 2015), places sexuality as something that must be understood as inherent to every individual, considered unique to each person and manifesting at any time in life. It would then be a mixture of symbolic and physical feelings, such as acceptance, tenderness, pleasure and respect, for example. Rozendo and Alves (2015) found from a survey conducted with the elderly, that many of them seek sexual fulfillment precisely in the elderly, and that they are happy with their sexual life, considering it satisfactory, even though it is a taboo for society as one all.

What was verified in this research, corroborates with what Hogan (1985) *apud* Rozendo and Alves (2015), affirm about sexuality, about a fusion of physical and symbolic feelings, so that, it is explicit in the speech of most of the participants of the specific questionnaire, which thinks respect and loyalty as a preponderant factor in the relationship.

With regard to disease prevention campaigns, it is noted in the interview that another important factor is that of health protection, and this research elucidates many aspects that have connection with observable behaviors in the place where the interviews were conducted.

### **5.2- Sexuality within a transgenerational perspective**

Sexuality is seen from different perspectives over generations and Vieiret *et al*. (2016) argue that specific characteristics of each stage of the development of human sexuality be considered and the influence of socio-historical factors, including political, economic, ideological and biopsychosocial aspects on human development and behavior.

With regard to marriage, Carvalho and Paiva (2010) point to Western cultural changes from the Middle Ages to the present. According to the authors, marriage was established as a sacrament by the Catholic Church and had procreation as its sole purpose. In the transition period between the Renaissance and the Modern Age, in the 18th century, marriage started to be seen from a perspective where love was prioritized, compatibility between spouses and sexual practice became more accepted. Subsequently, in the period of the Industrial Revolution, there is an approximation of emotional family ties and we begin to discuss marriage as a choice involving love and not necessarily an obligation, considering the satisfaction of

both spouses. In the 20th century, from the development of Psychoanalysis, sexuality has become a major issue, pointing out its importance in the development of human beings, the existence of oedipal relationships and the categorization of the stages of development. In the process, getting married and staying married became choices, diverging in some points from the religious perspective.

Bauman (2004, *apud* CARVALHO; PAIVA, 2010) presents that the current society is in an individualization process and that it increasingly seeks disposable, soluble relationships, of uncertain duration, believing that it is always possible to find for yourself a better partner, of so that the greater the detachment, the better, which masks a real desire of human beings to relate. Carvalho and Paiva (2010) explain that a large part of this change in perspective is related to feminist movements, the change in the role of women, the development of the contraceptive pill and the emergence of divorce.

Through a field study, the authors analyzed that contrary to what many women today seem, whether young or older, they present contradictions between a "revolutionary" discourse and in the unconscious conservative ideas about the role of women and the role of man in society, as well as ideals about married life and motherhood, resulting from values rooted in family and social inheritances. At the end of the study, they found that older women consider that nowadays people see sexuality as just fun, revealing that in their opinion women should be submissive and focus on motherhood and the home.

The perspective on sexuality has changed a lot over the generations. In the 21st century, discussions are more open than they were in the past and space was opened to address, besides the theme of sex and sexual practice, other aspects of sexuality, such as gender identity, sexual orientation, libido, among many possible issues of approach. However, it appears that despite the greater openness for discussion, it is still taboo in Western society to discuss such matters.

## V. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

As discussed in the course of the present work, human sexuality has its roots in ancient civilizations, these being the ones that gave rise to Western sexual practices. Understanding the influence of culture, beliefs, myths and customs in the formation of human mentality and behavior regarding sexuality are of great relevance, and can thus be thought from the biopsychosocial perspective.

We also saw that sexuality is not limited to the sexual act, as it can be understood as a way of being that is

incorporated into a body through its practices, that is, it is basically the way we experience being a man and being a woman.

Each stage of the development of human sexuality has its prevalent characteristics, in adulthood it is considered that the individual is mature and safe to establish solid affective bonds, thus enjoying, adequately, their sexuality. In the case of the elderly, there is a prevalence of the qualitative in relationships, in the manifestations of affections, such as tenderness, companionship, understanding, among others, not discarding, in any way, the continuity of sexual activity in this phase, despite the reprehensible social representations that these experience within society.

Finally, combined with the bibliographic contributions and the field research carried out, it was possible to understand the breadth related to the theme of human sexuality, especially with regard to the phase of old age. We emphasize that our intention to know the representations of the sexuality of this public and the possible changes in sexual practice was limited, mainly due to the scarcity with regard to scientific articles aimed at adult and elderly life from the perspective of the Freudian genital phase, due also to the little knowledge that the public had on the subject of sexuality, it became evident that there is confusion between sexuality and sex itself, impairing the evaluation of responses, and also due to the low number of participants who joined the survey.

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